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STATE FOR IO/T MATTHEW GOLDSTEIN AND FOR EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2019

TAGS: KNNP AORC IAEA PREL UK AR IR

SUBJECT: HMG HAS NOT DECIDED WHOM TO SUPPORT FOR IAEA  
DIRECTOR GENERAL

REF: SECSTATE 46302

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Gregory Berry  
for reasons 1.4 b and d

¶1. (S/NF) Summary. HMG has not decided whom to support for Director General (DG) of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Simon Manley, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Director, Defense and Strategic Threats, told the Political Minister Counselor May 11. The issue of whom to support has been under consideration at the highest levels of the British government, including by Prime Minister Brown, Manley asserted. HMG had hoped that OPCW Director General Rogelio Pfirter, an Argentine, would emerge as a compromise candidate. Since that has not happened, the UK is now evaluating the three European candidates (Echavarri, Petric, and Poncelet), Manley said. End Summary.

No Decision...Yet

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¶2. (S/NF) Simon Manley, the FCO's Director, Defense and Strategic Threats, told the Political Minister Counselor May 11 that HMG has not decided whom to support for DG of the IAEA. He stated that the issue of who should be the next DG has been under consideration at the highest levels of Britain's government, including by Prime Minister Brown. The Political Minister Counselor stressed that the United States strongly supports Amano's candidacy; he underlined Amano's considerable experience and stated that Amano is the most electable of the candidates. Manley noted that HMG agrees with the U.S. that the next IAEA DG should combine strong administrative skills with substantive knowledge, which would permit him to effectively handle key issues, including Iran.

Evaluating the European Candidates

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¶3. (S/NF) Manley said that HMG had hoped that OPCW Director General Rogelio Pfirter, an Argentine, would emerge as a compromise candidate. FS Miliband discussed that possibility recently with his Argentine counterpart, but Argentina has not endorsed a Pfirter candidacy. Manley stated that HMG is still "familiarizing" itself with the three European candidates (Echavarri, Petric, and Poncelet). He said that they have not yet come to London to meet with British officials to present the merits of their respective candidacies.

¶4. (S/NF) In an earlier May 7th meeting with Poloff, FCO Counterproliferation Department Desk Officer Delphine Hornau

had also stated that the UK has not decided whom to support for the IAEA DG. (Note: Hornau is a French diplomat participating in an exchange program with the FCÔ. End Note.) Poloff reviewed with Hornau the reasons why the U.S. supports Amano's candidacy and noted that he was the most electable of the candidates. Hornau acknowledged Amano's strengths, especially vis--vis the other candidates, and said that HMG was aware of strong U.S. support for Amano.

¶ 15. (S/NF) She stated that the UK is disappointed that a compromise candidate has not emerged and affirmed that HMG had initially hoped that OPCW Director General Rogelio Pfirter would come forward as a candidate. However, these efforts &went nowhere,<sup>8</sup> which was a &real disappointment for the UK,<sup>8</sup> according to Hornau. She stated that UK policy makers are worried that a continuing stalemate could present the &real risk<sup>8</sup> of ElBaradei putting his name forward again for Director General. Without providing further details, she referenced &rumors<sup>8</sup> that a compromise candidate could still come forward, possibly a Brazilian.

¶ 16. (S/NF) Hornau said that that no UK decision would likely occur until the UK had further studied the "weaknesses and strengths" of the three European candidates. "We just don't know them," especially Poncelet and Echavarri, Hornau stated.

Poncelet and Echavarri are "handicapped" by ties to the nuclear industry, which would make them "unacceptable" to Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) countries, Hornau elaborated. Although Petric is "respected and competent," he lacks "great expertise." The Slovene government has "marketed" Petric as a "NAM-friendly candidate." South African candidate Minty has "strong relationships" in London and the South African

government has promoted his candidacy, but Hornau suggested that the UK has excluded supporting his candidacy.

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